

## § 1621.2

further intended to help ensure that the grievance procedures adopted by recipients will result, to the extent possible, in the provision of an effective remedy in the resolution of complaints.

### § 1621.2 Grievance Committee.

The governing body of a recipient shall establish a grievance committee or committees, composed of lawyer and client members of the governing body, in approximately the same proportion in which they are on the governing body.

### § 1621.3 Complaints by applicants about denial of legal assistance.

A recipient shall establish a simple procedure for review of complaints by applicants about decisions to deny legal assistance to the applicant. The procedure shall, at a minimum, provide: A practical method for the recipient to provide applicants with adequate notice of the complaint procedures and how to make a complaint; and an opportunity for applicants to confer with the Executive Director or the Executive Director's designee, and, to the extent practical, with a representative of the governing body. The procedure shall be designed to foster effective communications between the recipient and complaining applicants.

### § 1621.4 Complaints by clients about manner or quality of legal assistance.

(a) A recipient shall establish procedures for the review of complaints by clients about the manner or quality of legal assistance that has been rendered by the recipient to the client.

(b) The procedures shall be designed to foster effective communications between the recipient and the complaining client and, at a minimum, provide:

(1) A method for providing a client, at the time the person is accepted as a client or as soon thereafter as is practical, with adequate notice of the complaint procedures and how to make a complaint;

(2) For prompt consideration of each complaint by the Executive Director or the Executive Director's designee,

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(3) An opportunity for the complainant, if the Executive Director or the Executive Director's designee is unable to resolve the matter, to submit an oral or written statement to a grievance committee established by the governing body as required by § 1621.2 of this Part. The procedures shall also: provide that the opportunity to submit an oral statement may be accomplished in person, by teleconference, or through some other reasonable alternative; permit a complainant to be accompanied by another person who may speak on that complainant's behalf; and provide that, upon request of the complainant, the recipient shall transcribe a brief written statement, dictated by the complainant for inclusion in the recipient's complaint file.

(c) Complaints received from clients about the manner or quality of legal assistance that has been rendered by a private attorney pursuant to the recipient's private attorney involvement program under 45 CFR Part 1614 shall be processed in a manner consistent with its responsibilities under 45 CFR § 1614.3(d)(3) and with applicable state or local rules of professional responsibility.

(d) A file containing every complaint and a statement of its disposition shall be preserved for examination by LSC. The file shall include any written statement submitted by the complainant or transcribed by the recipient from a complainant's oral statement.

## PART 1622—PUBLIC ACCESS TO MEETINGS UNDER THE GOVERNMENT IN THE SUNSHINE ACT

### Sec.

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AUTHORITY: Sec. 1004(g), Pub. L. 95-222, 91 Stat. 1619, (42 U.S.C. 2996c(g)).

SOURCE: 49 FR 30940, Aug. 2, 1984, unless otherwise noted.

## Legal Services Corporation

## § 1622.4

### § 1622.1 Purpose and scope.

This part is designed to provide the public with full access to the deliberations and decisions of the Board of Directors of the Legal Services Corporation, committees of the Board, and state Advisory Councils, while maintaining the ability of those bodies to carry out their responsibilities and protecting the rights of individuals.

### § 1622.2 Definitions.

*Board* means the Board of Directors of the Legal Services Corporation.

*Committee* means any formally designated subdivision of the Board established pursuant to §1601.27 of the By-Laws of the Corporation.

*Council* means a state Advisory Council appointed by a state Governor or the Board pursuant to section 1004(f) of the Legal Services Corporation Act of 1974, 42 U.S.C. 2996c(f).

*Director* means a voting member of the Board or a Council. Reference to actions by or communications to a "Director" means action by or communications to Board members with respect to proceedings of the Board, committee members with respect to proceedings of their committees, and council members with respect to proceedings of their councils.

*General Counsel* means the General Counsel of the Corporation, or, in the absence of the General Counsel of the Corporation, a person designated by the President to fulfill the duties of the General Counsel or a member designated by a council to act as its chief legal officer.

*Meetings* means the deliberations of a quorum of the Board, or of any committee, or of a council, when such deliberations determine or result in the joint conduct or disposition of Corporation business, but does not include deliberations about a decision to open or close a meeting, a decision to withhold information about a meeting, or the time, place, or subject of a meeting.

*Public observation* means the right of any member of the public to attend and observe a meeting within the limits of reasonable accommodations made available for such purposes by the Corporation, but does not include any right to participate unless expressly invited by the Chairman of the Board of

Directors, and does not include any right to disrupt or interfere with the disposition of Corporation business.

*Publicly available* for the purposes of §1622.6(e) means to be procurable either from the Secretary of the Corporation at the site of the meeting or from the Office of Government Relations at Corporation Headquarters upon reasonable request made during business hours.

*Quorum* means the number of Board or committee members authorized to conduct Corporation business pursuant to the Corporation's By-laws, or the number of council members authorized to conduct its business.

*Secretary* means the Secretary of the Corporation, or, in the absence of the Secretary of the Corporation, a person appointed by the Chairman of the meeting to fulfill the duties of the Secretary, or a member designated by a council to act as its secretary.

### § 1622.3 Open meetings.

Every meeting of the Board, a committee or a council shall be open in its entirety to public observation except as otherwise provided in § 1622.5.

### § 1622.4 Public announcement of meetings.

(a) Public announcement shall be posted of every meeting. The announcement shall include: (1) The time, place, and subject matter to be discussed;

(2) Whether the meeting or a portion thereof is to be open or closed to public observation; and

(3) The name and telephone number of the official designated by the Board, committee, or council to respond to requests for information about the meeting.

(b) The announcement shall be posted at least seven calendar days before the meeting, unless a majority of the Directors determines by a recorded vote that Corporation business requires a meeting on fewer than seven days notice. In the event that such a determination is made, public announcement shall be posted at the earliest practicable time.

(c) Each public announcement shall be posted at the offices of the Corporation in an area to which the public has access, and promptly submitted to the

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FEDERAL REGISTER for publication. Reasonable effort shall be made to communicate the announcement of a Board or committee meeting to the chairman of each council and the governing body and the program director of each recipient of funds from the Corporation, and of a council meeting to the governing body and program director of each recipient within the same State.

(d) An amended announcement shall be issued of any change in the information provided by a public announcement. Such changes shall be made in the following manner:

(1) The time or place of a meeting may be changed without a recorded vote.

(2) The subject matter of a meeting, or a decision to open or close a meeting or a portion thereof, may be changed by recorded vote of a majority of the Directors that Corporation business so requires and that no earlier announcement of the change was possible.

An amended public announcement shall be made at the earliest practicable time and in the manner specified by § 1622.4 (a) and (c). In the event that changes are made pursuant to § 1622.4(d)(2), the amended public announcement shall also include the vote of each Director upon such change.

[49 FR 30940, Aug. 2, 1984, as amended at 50 FR 30714, July 29, 1985]

**§ 1622.5 Grounds on which meetings may be closed or information withheld.**

Except when the Board or council finds that the public interest requires otherwise, a meeting or a portion thereof may be closed to public observation, and information pertaining to such meeting or portion thereof may be withheld, if the Board or council determines that such meeting or portion thereof, or disclosure of such information, will more probably than not:

(a) Relate solely to the internal personnel rules and practices of the Corporation;

(b) Disclose matters specifically exempted from disclosure by statute (other than the Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. 552): Provided, That such statute (1) requires that the matters be withheld from the public in

such a manner as to leave no discretion on the issue, or

(2) Establishes particular types of matters to be withheld;

(c) Disclose trade secrets and commercial or financial information obtained from a person and privileged or confidential;

(d) Involve accusing any person of a crime or formally censuring any person;

(e) Disclose information of a personal nature where disclosure would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy;

(f) Disclose investigatory records compiled for the purpose of enforcing the Act or any other law, or information which if written would be contained in such records, but only to the extent that production of such records or information would: (1) Interfere with enforcement proceedings,

(2) Deprive a person of a right to a fair trial or an impartial adjudication,

(3) Constitute an unwarranted invasion of personal privacy,

(4) Disclose the identity of a confidential source,

(5) Disclose investigative techniques and procedures, or

(6) Endanger the life or physical safety of law enforcement personnel;

(g) Disclose information the premature disclosure of which would be likely to frustrate significantly implementation of a proposed Corporation action, except that this paragraph shall not apply in any instance where the Corporation has already disclosed to the public the content or nature of its proposed action, or where the Corporation is required by law to make such disclosure on its own initiative prior to taking final action on such proposal; or

(h) Specifically concern the Corporation's participation in a civil action or proceeding, an action in a foreign court or international tribunal, or an arbitration, or the initiation, conduct, or disposition by the Corporation of a particular case involving a determination on the record after opportunity for a hearing.

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### § 1622.6 Procedures for closing discussion or withholding information.

(a) No meeting or portion of a meeting shall be closed to public observation, and no information about a meeting shall be withheld from the public, except by a recorded vote of a majority of the Directors with respect to each meeting or portion thereof proposed to be closed to the public, or with respect to any information that is proposed to be withheld.

(b) A separate vote of the Directors shall be taken with respect to each meeting or portion thereof proposed to be closed to the public, or with respect to any information which is proposed to be withheld; except, a single vote may be taken with respect to a series of meetings or portions thereof which are proposed to be closed to the public, or with respect to any information concerning such series of meetings, so long as each meeting in such series involves the same particular matters and is scheduled to be held no more than thirty days after the initial meeting in such series.

(c) Whenever any person's interest may be directly affected by a matter to be discussed at a meeting, the person may request that a portion of the meeting be closed to public observation by filing a written statement with the Secretary. The statement shall set forth the person's interest, the manner in which that interest will be affected at the meeting, and the grounds upon which closure is claimed to be proper under § 1622.5. The Secretary shall promptly communicate the request to the Directors, and a recorded vote as required by paragraph (a) of this section shall be taken if any Director so requests.

(d) With respect to each vote taken pursuant to paragraphs (a) through (c) of this section, the vote of each Director participating in the vote shall be recorded and no proxies shall be allowed.

(e) With respect to each vote taken pursuant to paragraphs (a) through (c) of this section, the Corporation shall, within one business day, make publicly available:

(1) A written record of the vote of each Director on the question;

(2) A full written explanation of the action closing the meeting, portion(s) thereof, or series of meetings, with reference to the specific exemptions listed in § 1622.5, including a statement of reasons as to why the specific discussion comes within the cited exemption and a list of all persons expected to attend the meeting(s) or portion(s) thereof and their affiliation.

[49 FR 30940, Aug. 2, 1984, as amended at 50 FR 30714, July 29, 1985]

### § 1622.7 Certification by the General Counsel.

Before a meeting or portion thereof is closed, the General Counsel shall publicly certify that, in his opinion, the meeting may be so closed to the public and shall state each relevant exemption. A copy of the certification, together with a statement from the presiding officer of the meeting setting forth the time and place of the meeting and the persons present, shall be retained by the Corporation.

### § 1622.8 Records of closed meetings.

(a) The Secretary shall make a complete transcript or electronic recording adequate to record fully the proceedings of each meeting or portion thereof closed to the public, except that in the case of meeting or any portion thereof closed to the public pursuant to paragraph (h) of § 1622.5, a transcript, a recording, or a set of minutes shall be made.

Any such minutes shall describe all matters discussed and shall provide a summary of any actions taken and the reasons therefor, including a description of each Director's views expressed on any item and the record of each Director's vote on the question. All documents considered in connection with any action shall be identified in the minutes.

(b) A complete copy of the transcript, recording, or minutes required by paragraph (a) of this section shall be maintained at the Corporation for a Board or committee meeting, and at the appropriate Regional Office for a council meeting, for a period of two years after the meeting, or until one year after the conclusion of any Corporation proceeding with respect to which the

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meeting was held, whichever occurs later.

(c) The Corporation shall make available to the public all portions of the transcript, recording, or minutes required by paragraph (a) of this section that do not contain information that may be withheld under §1622.5. A copy of those portions of the transcript, recording, or minutes that are available to the public shall be furnished to any person upon request at the actual cost of duplication or transcription.

(d) Copies of Corporation records other than notices or records prepared under this part may be pursued in accordance with part 1602 of these regulations.

### § 1622.9 Emergency procedures.

If, in the opinion of the Chairman, the Directors are rendered incapable of conducting a meeting by the acts or conduct of any members of the public present at the meeting, the Directors may thereupon determine by a recorded vote of the majority of the number of Directors present at the meeting that the Chairman or presiding officer of the Board shall have the authority to have such members of the public who are responsible for such acts or conduct removed from the meeting.

[50 FR 30714, July 29, 1985]

### § 1622.10 Report to Congress.

The Corporation shall report to the Congress annually regarding its compliance with the requirements of the Government in the Sunshine Act, 5 U.S.C. 552(b), including a tabulation of the number of meetings open to the public, the number of meetings or portions of meetings closed to the public, the reasons for closing such meetings or portions thereof, and a description of any litigation brought against the Corporation under 5 U.S.C. 552b, including any costs assessed against the Corporation in such litigation.

## PART 1623—SUSPENSION PROCEDURES

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1623.6 Interim funding.

AUTHORITY: 42 U.S.C. 2996e(b)(1); Pub. L. 104-134, 110 Stat. 1321, Sec. 509; Pub. L. 105-119, 111 Stat. 2440, Sec. 501(b).

SOURCE: 63 FR 64648, Nov. 23, 1998, unless otherwise noted.

### § 1623.1 Purpose.

The purpose of this rule is to:

(a) Ensure that the Corporation is able to take prompt action when necessary to safeguard LSC funds or to ensure the compliance of a recipient with applicable provisions of law, or a rule, regulation, guideline or instruction issued by the Corporation, or the terms and conditions of a recipient's grant or contract with the Corporation; and

(b) Provide procedures for prompt review that will ensure informed deliberation by the Corporation when it has made a proposed determination that financial assistance to a recipient should be suspended.

### § 1623.2 Definitions.

For the purposes of this part:

(a) *Knowing and willful* means that the recipient had actual knowledge of the fact that its action or lack thereof constituted a violation and despite such knowledge, undertook or failed to undertake the action.

(b) *Recipient* means any grantee or contractor receiving legal assistance from the Corporation under section 1006(a)(1)(A) of the LSC Act.

(c) *Suspension* means an action taken during the term of the recipient's current grant or contract with the Corporation that withholds financial assistance to a recipient, in whole or in part, until the end of the suspension period pending corrective action by the recipient or a decision by the Corporation to initiate termination proceedings.

### § 1623.3 Grounds for suspension.

(a) Financial assistance provided to a recipient may be suspended when the Corporation determines that there has been a substantial violation by the recipient of an applicable provision of law, or a rule, regulation, guideline or instruction issued by the Corporation, or a term or condition of the recipient's current grant or contract with